



1998 Epidemiology Program Events

Division of Community and Environmental Health – IHS HQ December 21, 1998

IHS Epidemiology Program Update

Season's greetings from all of us at the Epidemiology(Epi) Program in Albuquerque. In a time of great changes, we are continuing to broaden our network of Public Health support services for the entire Indian Health System. The four funded Tribal Epi Centers are gaining momentum and have been successful in attracting grants to augment their core funding. A new agreement has strengthened our ties with the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center and assigned our former EIS officer there. Most importantly, we have continued to expand the scope of our collaboration with the nation's primary public health agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In an environment of rapidly

changing health care systems, we're committed to developing a new model of public health services that will serve the needs of all American Indian and Alaska Native people. We are hopeful that the FY2000 budget will contain new money for expansion of the EpiCenter program to new sites – stay tuned!

This year, with the help of our CDC partners, we've attracted some new and exciting talent:

Jennifer Giroux, MD, is our new Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officer from CDC. She will spend the next two years at HQW, working on a variety of chronic and communicable disease issues and getting field experience and training in epidemiology.

Leslie Randall, RN, MPH, is

assigned here from the Division of Reproductive Health, CDC, to conclude the Aberdeen SIDS study and to perform Community Health Assessment surveys.

Amy Groom, MPH, is our contract epidemiologist for infectious disease issues.

Tim Doyle, MPH, is a contractor hired to develop Hepatitis surveillance programs.

We are also happy to be working with Michael Gomez and Danny Macias, who are developing the Performance Evaluation System for meeting JCAH/ORYX requirements using PCC data.

Special points of interest:

- *Cancer Support Group training is Feb. 1-5 in Albq. and Santo Domingo, NM*
- *1999 Colposcopy Refresher/Advanced Workshop is March 24-26, in Albq. NM*

CALL (505) 248-4132 FOR MORE INFO



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STD Prevention and Control Program

Happy Holidays from Rachel Pacheco and Laura Shelby in the STD Prevention and Control Program. 1998 was a busy year! The Stop Chlamydia/Use Azithromycin Program currently has about 100 participating facilities, up from 35 when the program first started in 1996. Also, 13 IHS and Tribal facilities were funded to pilot chlamydia screening to target populations within their clinical settings not routinely screened. These sites are using highly sensitive urine-based tests

eliminating the need to test for chlamydia by invasive procedures such as urethral swabbing or pelvic exams. We collaborated with the Montana State STD Program on a special chlamydia initiative with the Billings IHS Area to test all sex partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia by using the urine-based test in the field. Also, we evaluated the chlamydia services for one of the facilities in the Albuquerque IHS Area. We are offering the same program evaluation to

any IHS or Tribal facilities interested in evaluating their STD control activities. If you have any questions about our program, please give us a call.



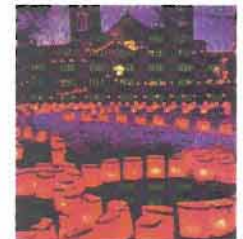
Infectious Disease

Amy Groom joined the Epidemiology Program as the new infectious disease staff epidemiologist in September. In addition to trying to learn everyone's name and figure out how things work at IHS, she inherited several projects from her predecessor which have kept her busy. The methicillin-resistant *staph aureus*

"... methicillin-resistant *staph aureus* study is nearing completion..."

(MRSA) study carried out in conjunction with the Minnesota State Health Dept. and the Greater Leech Lake service unit in Cass Lake is nearing completion. The project will not end with the report, however – the results from this study will be the basis for subsequent work, which will seek to identify community risk factors for MRSA and possible public health interventions. Other projects

include a water container project led by the Navajo Nation Infectious Disease Program, establishing a working group to look at antibiotic resistance in the northern plains areas, and learning how to use a Macintosh computer.



Cancer Survivors and Colposcopy Training

In 1999, we will continue our two very popular training programs. The Cancer Survivors Support Group training will be offered twice, with the first session the week of February 1st and the second one in the fall. This course is offered in

partnership with People Living Through Cancer (Albuquerque) and A Gathering of Cancer Support (Santo Domingo Pueblo). Trainees will learn how to effectively start and run a support group for cancer survivors.

The Colposcopy training course for primary providers will be March 24–26 in Albuquerque. This year we are only offering the Refresher/Advanced Workshop. In 2000, we will again offer the 'Basic' training.

New EIS Officer

Dreams of living in Albuquerque, NM this winter have come true for Jennifer Giroux. Jennifer is our new Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officer. She spent her last winter doing an internship at MeritCare hospital in Fargo, ND...after which she started the EIS training program at the CDC. Fortunately, for her, she was placed at the Epidemiology

Program (IHS Headquarters) for the next two years.

Between assisting with outbreaks, from plague in the southwest to food-borne illness and an MRSA fatality in the Northern Plains, she has been tackling chronic disease issues related to tuberculosis and cancer.

Jennifer, Rosebud Sioux, previously

worked with the Epi Program at the Aberdeen IHS Area office. She's really pleased with being at the IHS HQ office and having the opportunity to work with other tribes and service units. If you want to request epidemiology services, give her a call.





Women's Health

Carol Johnson and the original nine (9) tribes that were funded through the CDC Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Programs have begun their fifth year. The original nine will compete for another five years of funding this summer. There are currently 15 tribes and tribal organizations with cooperative agreements with CDC to provide breast and cervical cancer screening services to low income, uninsured, underinsured Native American women. This year CDC also funded the Northwest Portland Area

Indian Health Board to support the implementation of comprehensive cancer control plans. Two programs funded by the PHS Office of Women's Health Federal Coordinating Committee on Breast Cancer for Administrative supplements were completed. The Alaska Community Health Aide Program Breast Cancer Initiative developed a breast health module which has been distributed to IHS MCH Coordinators. Women's Health Software was supported with training in Aberdeen, Albuquerque,

Oklahoma City, Pine Ridge, and Portland. Cancer and women's health issues continue to receive increased emphasis and resources throughout the Native American community.



Immunization Program

Joan Takehara has been reporting the national immunization rates for American Indian children under the age of 27 months. She continues to support Indian Health Service Areas in maintaining the goal of 90% immunization rates. She will begin an

adolescent immunization project with those IHS Areas who are interested. She is in the process of assisting with development of a policy memo for the sharing of Indian Health Service patient information with State Health Department Registry programs.



SIDS and Community Surveys

Leslie Randall, from the Nez Perce Nation, is an Epidemiologist completing the results of a report on SIDS in the Aberdeen Area to the tribes that was published through the CDC. These tribes sent copies of this to the following Committees: House Appropriations, House Ways and Means, Senate

Appropriations, and the Senate Indian Affairs. Anyone interested in a copy can call her or e-mail her at: randall@mail.ihs.gov.

Ms. Randall works, through an agreement between IHS and CDC, on Reproductive Health / Behavioral Risk Surveys and provides technical assistance for the

design, implementation, analysis, training, and dissemination of findings to the tribes. Assistance is available for questionnaire development, survey design, interview training, fieldwork implementation, and data analysis through the CDC. Call for more info.

Tobacco Control Program

We had to say good-bye to Don Reece, but in June of 1998, we welcomed Lorene Reano as our new Tobacco Coordinator. She has responded to numerous inquiries from IHS and tribal programs regarding data on tobacco use, the national Tobacco Settlement and other pertinent information. She's assisted the CDC with its State Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, Teen Media Contest and Teen

Tobacco Use initiatives. As a member of the local American Cancer Society's Core Team, she involved three on-reservation middle schools in a 'Smokescream' campaign and one of them won the pledge drive contest. She also serves as project officer for the two CDC-funded tribal tobacco programs, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board and Great Lakes Intertribal Council.



Epidemiology

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Tobacco Control: Lorene Reano
Women's Health: Carol Johnson, Bobbie Peppers
Hepatitis: Tim Doyle
Reproductive Health: Leslie Randall
EIS Officer: Jennifer Giroux
Hantavirus/CDC Liaison: Ralph Bryan
GYN Oncology Consultant: Alan Waxman (part time)
Immunizations: Joan Takehara
Support staff: Ellen Ortiz, Leslie Baumgardner, Michelle Bowser,
Cynthia Panana

The mission of the Indian Health Service is to raise the health status of the American Indian and Alaska Native people to the highest level possible. The goals of the Epidemiology Program are to provide the foundation for all public health activities and to provide culturally appropriate public health interventions. The objectives are to describe causes of morbidity and mortality, identify risk factors for disease, and prevent and control disease.

Disease control and prevention activities we focus on are: Cancer, Tobacco, Women's Health, Immunizations, Sexually Transmitted Disease & Chlamydia, Tuberculosis, Hantavirus, and Hepatitis. Some of the services available include: data management and reporting, community surveys, emergency response, surveillance, liaison, training, and consultation to clinicians. Most services are at no cost. We are also involved in applied epidemiological research and policy development.

Look for us on the
Web soon.

Recent Publications

Cobb N. **Epidemiologic patterns of cancer.** In: Primary care of Native American patients: diagnosis, therapy, and epidemiology. James M. Galloway, Bruce W. Goldberg, Joseph S. Alpert, eds. pg 165-172. Butterworth-Heinemann, MA. 1999.

Cobb N, Paisano RE. **Patterns of cancer mortality among Native Americans.** *Cancer* 1998;83:2377-83.

Cobb N. **Investigating cancer clusters.** *The IHS Provider* 1997;22:173-5.

Cobb N, Paisano RE. **Cancer Mortality among American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States: Regional Differences in Indian Health, 1989-93.** Indian Health Service monograph. IHS Pub. No. 97-615-23. Rockville MD, 1997.

"Mi Cinca kin towani ewaktonji kte sni," **I will never forget my child.** Published June 30, 1998, Leslie L. Randall, RN, MPH, Thomas K. Welty, MD, MPH, Solomon Iyasu, MBBS, MPH and Marian Willinger,

Ph.D. DHHS, CDC. [report of SIDS study]

"Initiation of Formal Death Investigation Procedures Amongst the Northern Plains Indians: A Necessary Adjunct in the Study of American Indian Sudden Infant Deaths" in *American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology*, Brad Randall, MD and Leslie L. Randall, RN, MPH, accepted for publication August 17, 1998. Copyright forms sent back 11-10-98.

Shelby LK, Hunt D, Cheek J, Pacheco R. **Controlling Sexually Transmitted Diseases: An IHS Perspective.** *The IHS Provider* 1998;23:1-11.

Wolsey DH, Cheek J. **Epidemiologic patterns of morbidity and mortality.** In: Primary care of Native American patients: diagnosis, therapy, and epidemiology. James M. Galloway, Bruce W. Goldberg, Joseph S. Alpert, eds. pg 7-16. Butterworth-Heinemann, MA. 1999.

As another year draws to a close, we thank you for your friendship and goodwill and sincerely wish you all the happiness that a prosperous and successful New Year can bring.

